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back to the hotel, ordered my horse and drove homeward. On arrival home there was a letter from a friend, stating he had a white owl for me. Two weeks later I received a fine specimen from Yorktown, N. Y. It is now mounted and in my collection.

The measurements were as follows: extent, 5 ft. 8 in.; length, 28 in.; tail, 9 in.; male.

The plumage of this species is almost pure white, marked by dusky-brown on some of the feathers of head and back. The female is much darker than male, only the face, fore neck, middle of breast and feet being white; the other parts being heavily barred with dusky.

The eggs are 5—10, 1.76x2.24, pure white.

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## AMONG THE GULLS AT DUCK ISLAND.

BY CHAS. S. BUTTERS, HAVERHILL, MASS.

My article in the last number of the SEMI-ANNUAL, described a visit I made to an island off Portland Harbor, and securing a number of eggs of the Common Fern and Leach's Petrel.

After leaving that island, we started down the coast, headed for Mt. Desert, Me. It must be remembered that this was a fishing trip, and being the only oologist on board, I could not spend the time collecting that I wished to.

The coast from Portland to Mt. Desert is lined with islands, large and small. I think these islands would make good collecting grounds, but as it was rather late in the season I could not do much. I heard that on one of the islands, the year before, the American Herring Gull had been found breeding in large numbers. That was the island I wished to visit.

During the next few days I went ashore on quite a number of islands, finding a few Tern's eggs, and on one island I found a solitary nest of the Herring Gull, containing two eggs, which I collected. Not far from this nest some of the men found a pair of young gulls, about two-thirds grown. After a long chase they were captured and brought on board.

On the evening of July 13, we rounded the outer point of the island we had been searching for, (called Duck Island, and situated about twenty miles from Bar Harbor, off the coast) and dropped anchor about thirty rods off shore.

I wish you could have heard the noise. I thought I had heard "bird music" before, but I never did until that night. The Gulls were making an awful racket, and they kept it up all night.

The next morning we were up soon after day-break. A hasty breakfast and all hands started ashore, anxious to learn where all the noise came from the night before. On landing we started for the extreme point of the island: the point of the greatest racket.

The island was covered with a wild growth of spruce and hemlock, and about thirty feet above the sea level. The shore was very irregular, and covered with great, jagged boulders; quite a rough looking place. As we walked along we would occasionally find a nest with two or three eggs, but none to amount to anything until we reached the point of the island. As I stopped to look at a nest I found on the way, a few of the party arrived at the point some time before I did. I got there at last, and looked around me. I wish the readers of this article could have been with me. It would have made any collector, who had not seen this bird at home, open his eyes. There were nests in every direction. The men who had arrived first had collected eggs, and after marking had placed them in a pile, until they had almost a peck. They had collected young birds that were about two-thirds grown, to the number of twenty or more.

I could not begin to tell the number of nests; they were everywhere. Some of them were placed behind some rock or stump, as if for shelter; others were on the open ground.

Some of the nests were built very well, being about 15 inches in diameter and made of grass, sea-weed, etc., but the majority of them were just a little hollow in the ground, with a little dried grass in it, and on that the eggs were placed.

Most of the nests contained three eggs, but a good many of them only had two; incubation quite far advanced. Young birds were everywhere, and of all sizes.

While we were there, the old birds were sailing around overhead, and they were far from quiet, too. After sets and birds enough had been collected, we left for the boat, which was reached without mishap.

As we were going out to the yacht, I saw some strange birds flying over the beach a short distance down the shore. I persuaded one of the crew to row me down to them. I saw one of the birds flying over the water, and it looked as if it had a bright red tail. On shooting one it proved to be a fine male specimen of the Black Guillemot, and as its tail is quite short and feet red, it gave it the appearance, when flying, of having a red tail. I found these birds quite plentiful among the rocks. This was the only island on which I found them.

That they were breeding I soon found out by hearing the young among the rocks, but we could not get at them. I think it was too late for eggs. I found a few pieces of shells lying around on the rocks.

After dinner I began to prepare the eggs I had taken. I found I had quite a job before me, and it was three days before I finished them, preparing a few at a time. I was not able to save more than one egg out of six, as some of the birds in them were very large.

The young birds were kept in a pen on deck; fed on fish, clams, lobsters, etc. It was quite a job to furnish them with food, but they afforded us much amusement during the rest of the trip. Some of these same gulls may be seen in Haverhill to-day, seemingly as contented as at the native islands.

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## DIFFICULTIES.

BY C. S. BRIMLEY, RALEIGH, N. C.—MARCH, 1890.

Collecting eggs has its disappointments and perplexities as well as successes, and as the collecting season will soon be here, a few remarks on the subject may be in order. One difficulty that has often bothered me is how to find out when a nest contains a full set of eggs, in a case where it is impossible to look into the nest, and this often causes one to leave the next nests too long, and then the set, if saved, is adorned with holes one could almost get one's head through (figuratively speaking, I mean).

For instance, last spring we located a number of Pine Warbler nests building, and decided on a certain day to take them.